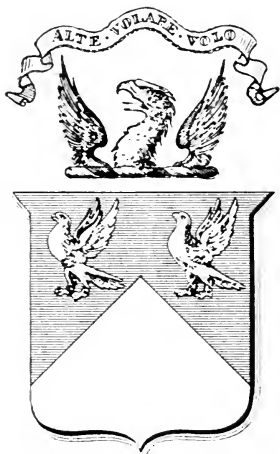




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6. Hunt, Nancy A. By Ox-team to California. 1916
7. Miller, E. I. A New departure in county government. 1913
8. Southern Pacific Company. San Francisco, the imperishable.

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9. Teggart, Frederick J. The
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10. Woolley, Lell Hawley.
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U.S. Department of Justice
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Washington, D.C.

Report of the Committee on the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy
Volume 1, Chapter 1

Southern Pacific

SAN FRANCISCO THE IMPERISHABLE

ON April 18th, 19th and 20th, following an earthquake, San Francisco was swept by a fire that destroyed its entire business section and a large portion of its residence district, covering 450 blocks or squares, comprising about one-sixth of its entire area. Before the ashes had cooled, the citizens had organized into working committees for the building of a New San Francisco that was not only talked about, but was already under way. The spirit and grit of the Californians of the Argonaut days of '49 were shown in the calm courage with which the loss was met and the determination to rebuild the new city, better and fairer than ever. The entire nation, roused at the news, gave sympathy and more, promptly and effectively. Across the continent, and from up and down the Pacific Coast, came messages of promised help. Train-loads and ship-loads of supplies were hurried forward to the distressed city, and before the week was ended, subscriptions aggregating nearly \$9,000,000 were pledged.

DISASTROUS COMBINATION OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

The combination of circumstances that caused San Francisco's plight was unique among world disasters—fire uncontrolled and unchecked, the fire department powerless without water supply, property owners almost helpless to save their possessions, because the street cars stopped running, and the rapid spread of the fire made it practically impossible to save anything in the path of the flames. The city, State and Federal authorities joined with the Citizens' Committee and the railway companies, and, undaunted by the combination of affairs that threatened the destruction of the entire city, went vigorously to work, met the situation more than half way, maintained peace and order, provided relief, and with double-quick dispatch furnished means for sending homeless thousands beyond the city's boundaries. The railroads threw open their gates and crowded ferry steamers and trains with fleeing refugees. The Southern Pacific Company alone transported, without charge, somewhere near 300,000 people in the nine days following the fire. The day of the greatest outgo was the 19th, when this company moved out of San Francisco seventy passengers every minute—a total of 1,073 cars, equivalent, say, to a train ten miles in length. On the 20th, nearly as many passengers left the city, and the movement was continuously heavy until the morning of the 26th. Simultaneous with the movement providing for carrying people to places of refuge outside the city was the prompt effort to transport relief supplies from all directions. And the record runs of relief trains shattered all trans-continental freight train records. Up to the night of May 3rd, the Southern Pacific alone had handled free into San Francisco 1409 cars of freight of all sorts for the



PANORAMA PHOTOGRAPH



PH OF SAN FRANCISCO, TAKEN APRIL 22ND, 1906, FROM AEROPLANE, SHOWING



A large section of the best residence district, a considerable business section and practically all the water front of the city were not reached by the fire. So far as shipping facilities go, both by rail and water, the city today is almost as good as it ever was. The burned section included a vast number of old ramshackle buildings, relics of pioneer days and their passing is a matter not to be greatly regretted.

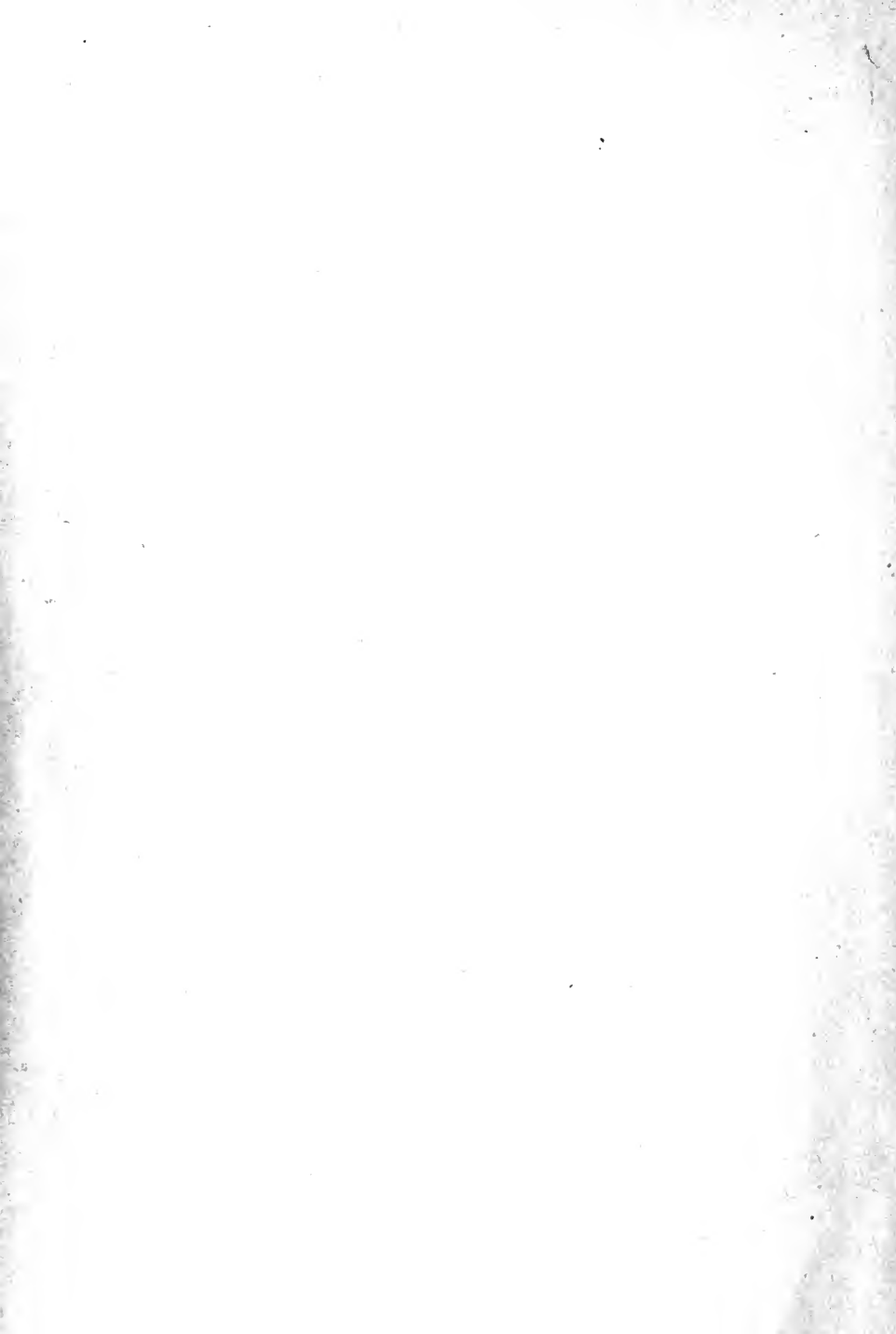
"YOU-CAN'T-DOWN-ME" CONFIDENCE.

Confidence was never lost and the quick and united action of the business men on the ground toward reconstruction was marvelous in quickness and effectiveness. Confidence from the outside was not less. The president of the Southern Pacific wired from New York to turn over without charge the entire facilities of that line in the work of relief, and then hurried westwardly by special train to take part on the ground in the work of restoration.

It is a gratifying fact, too, that the flight from San Francisco means for a large number of former residents nothing more than a temporary absence. More than that, property owners, far away on trips of pleasure or business, down the Nile, in Paris, in the heart of Mexico, wherever over the world's surface the sad tidings found them, have been hurrying homeward to the stricken city to here stand shoulder to shoulder with the builders and the doers. Already the places of some faint-hearted have been taken here by the strong-hearted and enterprising from other cities, although a general movement of artisans of any line of handicraft should not be encouraged without careful inquiry. California and the Pacific Coast generally is fairly well provided with skilled mechanics, and there can be no room here for the idle, or the men who drift and trust only to their wits to live.

The notable spirit everywhere throughout the city today is confidence of the "You-can't-down-me" sort. The press is full of it, and on street corners one hears nothing else, and the women—bless'em for it—are as cheerful over it as if camping in the city of ashes were the gayest of fashionable fads.

A daily paper editorial the Sunday after those critical days summarizes the situation thus: "Hope and Industry cannot be burned or drowned. They are immortal because the world lives on them. The rebuilding of Chicago began in the winter when the temperature was below zero and the bricks were laid in hot mortar. Here Nature smiles on us; let us smile back and put our hands to the building, not rebuilding. We have finished Revelation and now go back to Genesis."



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